NOAA, NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE, WEATHER FORECAST OFFICE

Miami, Florida 33165

…Near to Below Normal August Rainfall Most Areas...

...Wetter Than Normal Collier County and Lake Okeechobee Area...

September 1, 2009: The recently concluded month of August featured near to below normal rainfall over most of south Florida, except for portions of Collier County and around Lake Okeechobee which received significantly above normal rain (Figure 1). Most areas received anywhere from 4 to 8 inches of rain for the month, compared to the average August of around 6 to 9 inches.

A primary reason for the near to below normal rainfall was the lack of any significant weather systems of tropical nature affecting south Florida. Only one organized system of tropical origin affected the area in August – the tropical wave on August 15th which eventually became Tropical Storm Claudette in the northeastern Gulf of Mexico. This system produced rainfall amounts of 1 to 3 inches area-wide. Otherwise, the rainfall patterns were largely dictated by the daily sea and lake breezes. Easterly flow was the dominant wind pattern in August which normally leads to two areas of maximum rainfall: 1) interior and southwestern sections and 2) east of Lake Okeechobee. These two areas received the most rainfall in August.

A few Collier County locations received over 10 inches of rain in August, including Golden Gate (13.56 inches), Oasis Ranger Station (11.80 inches) and Marco Island (11.02 inches). As has been the case all summer, the city of Naples received significantly less rain than areas a few miles inland. Naples Regional Airport measured 6.20 inches of rain in August, almost 2 inches below the monthly normal and less than half of the total rainfall of Golden Gate just 4 miles east. Part of the reason for the lower rainfall amounts in Naples is their proximity to the ocean which means that the sea breeze penetrates farther inland and keeps most of the rain east of the city. Despite its coastal location, Marco Island's high rainfall amount was more random in nature than the rainfall farther inland.

Naples' year-to-date total of 17.04 inches as of August 31st ranks as the driest January to August period on record (going back to 1942).

Below are August rainfall totals and departure from normal in inches for select south Florida locations:

Location	August 2009 Rainfall	August Departure From Normal
Miami Int'l	7.91	-0.72
Fort Lauderdale Int'l	4.81	-2.07
Palm Beach Int'l	6.22	-0.43
Naples Regional	6.20	-1.85
Miami Beach	5.87	0.43
Moore Haven	7.08	0.28
The Redland (Perrine)	6.58	-2.14
Oasis Ranger Station	11.80	2.65

Below are 2009 Wet Season rainfall totals and departure from normal in inches for select locations:

Location	Wet Season 2009 Rainfall thru 8/31	Wet Season 2009 Departure From Normal thru 8/31
Miami Int'l	33.25	6.55
Fort Lauderdale Int'l	24.95	-2.93
Palm Beach Int'l	34.51	10.66
Naples Regional	15.66	-11.40
Miami Beach	37.64	18.19
Moore Haven	38.20	15.24
The Redland (Perrine)	32.04	1.90
Oasis Ranger Station	34.15	3.27

The precipitation outlook from the Climate Prediction Center for the remainder of the wet season which typically lasts into October is for a continuation of an increased likelihood of above normal rainfall over south Florida. This forecast is generally supported by late summer/early fall trends observed during previous El Niño events. For more information on rainfall totals and water conditions across south Florida, please visit the National Weather Service Miami-South Florida Forecast Office's hydrologic page at http://www.srh.noaa.gov/mfl/?n=drought_info.

For the latest weather conditions, forecasts, warnings, advisories and statements, please visit the National Weather Service Miami-South Florida Forecast Office's web site at weather.gov/southflorida.

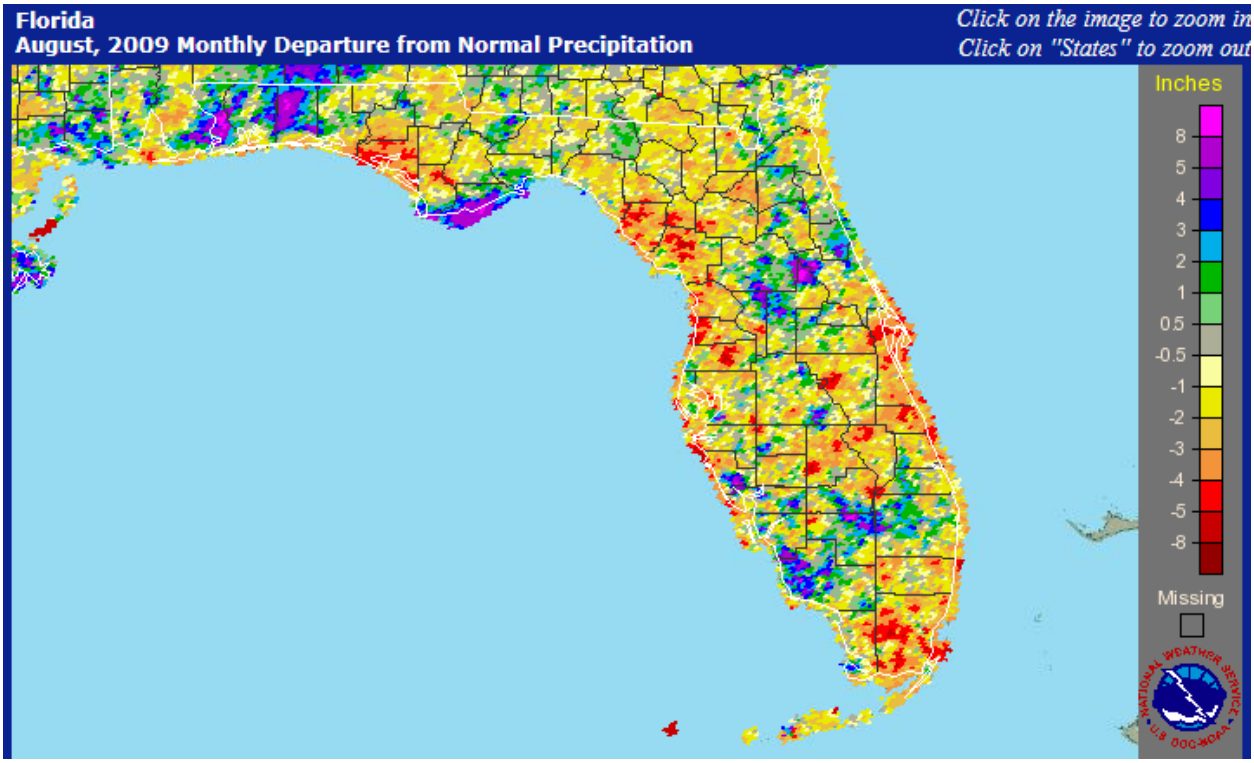

Figure 1: August 2009 Precipitation Departure From Normal (green/blue/purple areas are above normal, dark yellow/orange/red areas are below normal, gray/light yellow areas are near normal).

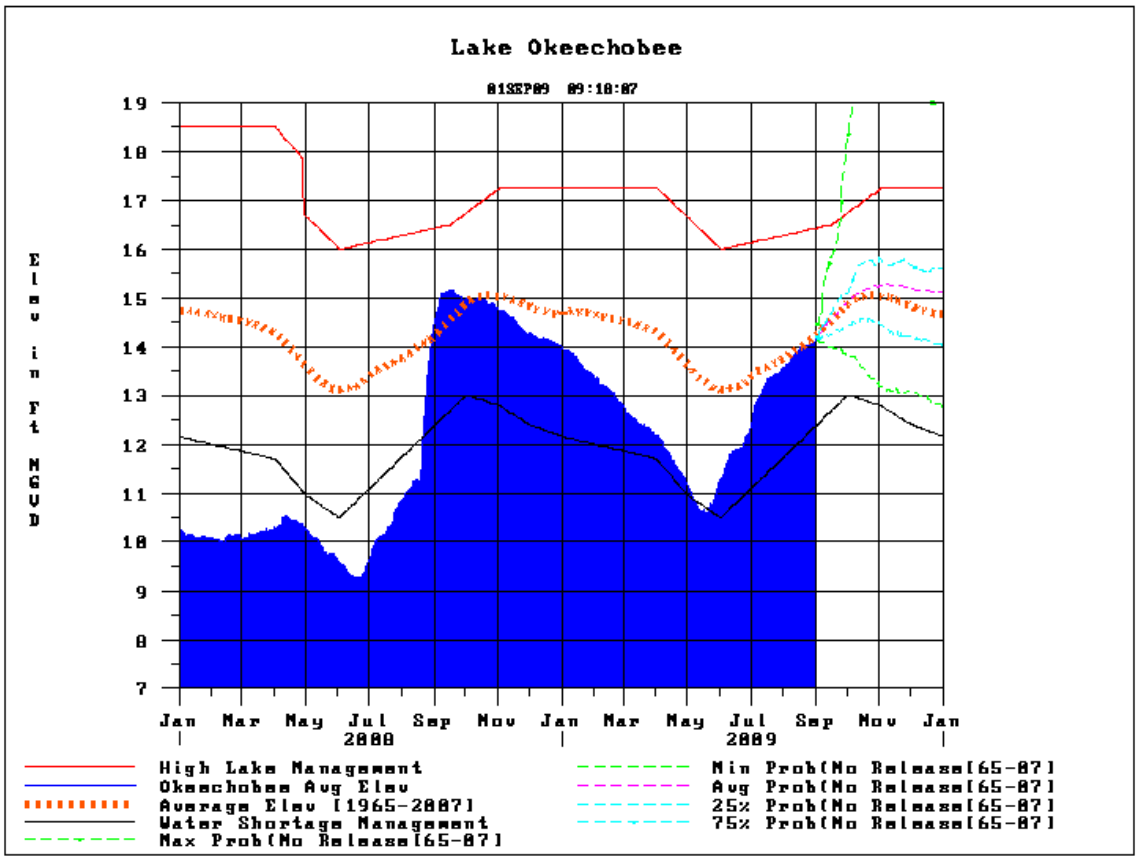

Figure 2: Lake Okeechobee Lake Level Jan 2008 through August 2009 (courtesy of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers).